

FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE
2430 E Street, NW
Washington 25, D. C.

CONFIDENTIAL

This document part of classified
integrated file. NAME CHECK required
prior to individual classification action

9 August 1948

Colonel William L. Travis
U.S. Army Air Forces
1st Air Division, Staff Engineer
APO No. 239, c/o Postmaster
San Francisco, California

Dear Bill:

I believe that you are one of the few classmates whose path I have not crossed since our graduation. I had it only too indelibly impressed upon me how long that has been by attending our 15 year reunion at West Point this June. Some 50 classmates were present and I think all in all the reunion was a grand success. I have, of course, heard of you many times through such mutual friends as Gabe Diceaway, Milt Summerfelt, Kingfish Kelly and others.

As a result of wounds received during the Luzon campaign, and after spending almost two years in the hospital, I was retired from the service on 1 March 1947 and have since been connected with the Central Intelligence Agency. As Chief of the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch I have been connected from the beginning with the proposed new monitoring station at [] and, of course, it is in this connection that I learned through Colonel John M. Sterling that you were at present the 1st Air Division Staff Engineer. I am certainly glad that you are there and I feel that I can fill in many of the missing links that apparently have caused some misunderstanding with reference to this project. It is, of course, for this reason that I am prompted to write at this time.

During the war the monitoring service in the Pacific was based on Japan. Therefore, we find ourselves at the present time with our most distant monitoring station in the Hawaiian Islands, from which location it is impossible for us to receive many of the broadcasts from the Asiatic mainland which are considered so vital by our intelligence agencies.

Well over a year ago we started surveying the Pacific for a new monitoring station from which we could accomplish our mission. Guam, Japan, the Philippines, Okinawa and other places were surveyed and tested. It was finally decided that the [] site on Okinawa offered an almost ideal spot from a technical standpoint. Late last year we sent a team to Okinawa to test this site and discuss it with the authorities on the spot. The project was discussed in detail

CONFIDENTIAL 03097A000200030149-8

CONFIDENTIAL

with the 1st Air Division staff as well as the RYKON staff. Initially there were some objections by 1st Air Division. After carefully examining the project, however, and having it explained to them by our team, it was decided that there was no objection to this project. Accordingly, the attached message (Tab A) was sent by 1st Air Division to CGFEAF on 4 December 1947.

This project having been found acceptable by all echelons of the command, we have proceeded with it to include getting the money allocated and farming out the job to the U.S. Army Engineers. Our engineer is at present working with the Western Ocean Division of the Army Engineers at Sanacito, California, in preparation of the final specifications, and it is anticipated that the contract will be let very shortly. About 1 July of this year I received an informal report from a member of this agency who had visited Okinawa that he understood your people were considering the reactivation of the [redacted]. Consequently, we queried the Air Forces here in Washington since we had been in touch with them earlier in connection with this project. On 7 July 1948 we were advised by the Air Forces in Washington that the [redacted] would be activated only in the event of war emergency.

25X1

25X1

With the project having reached quite an advanced stage of implementation, I was quite surprised when I received the attached message (Tab B) from my engineer who is working with the Army Engineers on the West Coast. The objections which he mentioned were identical to those which had been raised in the beginning and on which we thought we had completely satisfied the 1st Air Division prior to their dispatch of the message attached as Tab A.

I feel sure that all of this misunderstanding is due to the fact that the present 1st Air Division staff for the most part were not familiar with the actual project as presented late last year. The air target range was discussed in detail with the staff and it was agreed that there would be no interference to either operation since the range is more than a mile from the nearest antenna and I understand that the direction of fire is seaward. It was also agreed that the 80 foot poles would cause no interference to the strip since the nearest rhombic pole would be at least 1400 feet from the strip, and the terrain, direction of the strip, and prevailing winds preclude a landing or take-off from or toward the direction of the antenna field.

Of course, I may be prejudiced on this score, but I sincerely believe that there is no intelligence collecting activity in our intelligence structure that would be missed more than our service if it should be curtailed. It is not only a service for the Central Intelligence Agency, but a service for all government agencies particularly Central Intelligence, the Air Forces, Intelligence Division of the Army, the Navy and the State Department. We also supply the Voice of America, which, incidentally, is

CONFIDENTIAL

00104820

SECRET

needed by our classmate, Charlie Thayer, with a significant amount of material. We publish a Daily Report of foreign radio broadcasts of approximately 200 mimeographed pages each day and distribute it to all government agencies having a legitimate need for it.

It was certainly not our intention to interfere in any way with Air Forces installations or activities, and we certainly would not have gone on with the project had we had any idea that we would do so. However, we have reached such an advanced stage with this particular project at this time that it would be a serious blow to us and to our intelligence efforts if we should be forced to alter our course.

[redacted], who is presently in Tokyo, plans to arrive on Okinawa on or about 15 September 1948 and will be in charge of this project. He will be followed shortly thereafter by [redacted] who is our engineer. I am sure that you will find both of them fully cooperative and that all details of this project can be worked out to the mutual satisfaction and advantage of both the Air Forces and the Central Intelligence Agency. I will greatly appreciate your cooperation with [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

Please give my kindest regards to any of our mutual friends when you see them and I hope it will not be as long as it has been before we meet again.

Sincerely,

L. K. White

Attachments 2

Tab A

Tab B

LKN:hmq

cc: OO

Services Br



25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

0001000

001050100